

CLAIM AMENDMENTS:

Pending Claims

Claims 1-32 (Canceled).

Claim 33 (Currently Amended): A method of manufacture ~~for forming a slider end stop on a flexible zipper~~, comprising the following steps:

(a) forming first and second interlockable zipper parts each having a respective rail, which rails will be on opposite sides of the zipper when the first and second zipper parts are interlocked;

(b) interlocking said first and second zipper parts of a zipper;

(c) inserting a slider on an undeformed portion of said interlocked zipper parts; and

(d) transmitting sufficient ultrasonic wave energy into a T-shaped area of said interlocked zipper parts to cause said interlocked zipper parts to flatten and fuse in said T-shaped area, the rails of said interlocked zipper parts being undeformed on both sides of a stem of said T-shape.

Claim 34 (Original): The method as recited in claim 33, further comprising the step of directing said ultrasonic wave energy to form a series of spaced indentations in said flattened T-shaped area.

Claim 35 (Original): The method as recited in claim 33, further comprising the step of pre-heating at least one of said zipper parts prior to said step of transmitting ultrasonic wave energy.

Claim 36 (Original): The method as recited in claim 33, further comprising the step of directing cooling fluid

toward a flange of at least one of said zipper parts during said step of transmitting ultrasonic wave energy.

Claim 37 (New): The method as recited in claim 33, wherein said stem of said T shape is oriented generally transverse to a machine direction, further comprising the steps of:

(e) joining respective flanges of said first and second zipper parts to first and second portions of film material along respective first and second band-shaped zones disposed generally parallel to said machine direction;

(f) placing said first and second portions of film material in opposing relationship; and

(g) cross sealing the first and second portions in opposing relationship along a strip-shaped area generally oriented in the transverse direction,

wherein the strip-shaped area of cross sealing overlaps the flattened T-shaped area.

Claim 38 (New): The method as recited in claim 37, wherein step (f) is performed prior to step (e).

Claim 39 (New): The method as recited in claim 37, further comprising the step of cutting the cross-sealed strip of the opposing portions of web material along a line generally oriented in the transverse direction, the cut generally bisecting the flattened T-shaped area.

Claim 40 (New): A method of manufacture, comprising the following steps:

joining interlocked zipper parts to respective band-shaped portions of first and second webs of film material;

ultrasonically deforming the zipper parts to form a flattened T-shaped area having a stem oriented generally transverse to a machine direction;

cross sealing opposing portions of said first and second webs of film material along a strip-shaped area generally oriented in the transverse direction, the strip-shaped area of cross sealing overlapping the flattened T-shaped area; and

cutting the cross-sealed strip of the opposing portions of said first and second webs along a line generally oriented in the transverse direction, the cut generally bisecting the flattened T-shaped area.

Claim 41 (New): The method as recited in claim 40, wherein said deforming step comprises the steps of flattening the zipper material at the ends of the zipper parts and forming a series of spaced indentations in the flattened T-shaped area.

Claim 42 (New): The method as recited in claim 40, further comprising the step of pre-heating at least one of the zipper parts prior to ultrasonically deforming the zipper parts.

Claim 43 (New): The method as recited in claim 40, further comprising the step of directing cooling fluid toward a flange of at least one of the zipper parts during the ultrasonic deformation.

Claim 44 (New): The method as recited in claim 40, wherein said first and second webs are connected by a fold line.

Claim 45 (New): A method of manufacture, comprising the following steps:

(a) forming first and second interlockable zipper parts, said first zipper part comprising a first base, a first profiled closure element projecting from one side of said first base, and a first flange having a proximal end connected to said

first base, and said second zipper part comprising a second base, a second profiled closure element projecting from one side of said second base, and a second flange having a proximal end connected to said second base, wherein respective portions (hereinafter referred to as "rails") of said first and second bases adjacent the connection with said first and second flanges respectively have an outer dimension greater than an outer dimension of respective portions of said first and second bases remote from the connection with said first and second flanges respectively when said first and second zipper parts are interlocked;

(b) interlocking said first and second zipper parts;

(c) inserting a slider on an undeformed portion of said interlocked first and second zipper parts, said slider comprising respective hooks that latch under said rails of said zipper to retain said slider on said zipper; and

(d) ultrasonically deforming said first and second zipper parts to form a flattened area, said flattened area comprising a central region wherein said first and second zipper parts are flattened over the full height of said first and second bases, and first and second regions on opposite sides of and contiguous with said central region wherein said first and second zipper parts are flattened over partial heights of said first and second bases, said rails being not flattened in said first and second regions.

Claim 46 (New): The method as recited in claim 45, further comprising the following steps:

(e) joining said first and second flanges to respective band-shaped zones on first and second portions of film material;

(f) cross sealing opposing regions of said first and second portions of said film material along a strip-shaped area generally oriented in the transverse direction, the strip-shaped area of cross sealing overlapping the flattened T-shaped area; and

(g) cutting the cross-sealed strip of said first and second portions of said film material along a line generally oriented in the transverse direction, the cut generally bisecting the flattened T-shaped area.

Claim 47 (New): The method as recited in claim 46, wherein said first and second portions of said film material are connected by a fold line.

Claim 48 (New): The method as recited in claim 45, wherein said first and second zipper parts are formed by extrusion.

Claim 49 (New): The method as recited in claim 45, wherein said deforming step comprises the step of forming a series of spaced indentations in the flattened T-shaped area.